



MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

NOAA NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE NORTHEAST REGION HABITAT CONSERVATION DIVISION

Special Edition “Meet the staff”



Chris Boelke joined the Habitat Conservation Division in January 2003. Prior to coming to NERO/HCD, Chris worked with the New Jersey Coastal Management Program through the NOAA Coastal Services Center Fellowship Program. Chris has a Masters Degree in Marine Affairs from the University of Rhode Island. His primary role in the Division is environmental impact review of federal actions and permits throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. One significant area in which Chris has been involved is impact review of proposed Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Terminals. General issues of concern regarding LNG terminals include dredging for navigational access to the site, use of seawater for operational and regasification purposes, alteration of temperature regimes due to discharge of cooler water, impact and displacement of commercial and recreational fishing activities from deepwater ports, and benthic impacts related to pipelines. Currently, three LNG terminals are proposed within Massachusetts, including one onshore facility within the Taunton River in Fall River, and two offshore facilities proposed within Massachusetts Bay. (Christopher.Boelke@noaa.gov, 978/281-9131)



Lou Chiarella joined the NMFS Northeast Regional Office Habitat Conservation Division in 1998 to work on Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) issues. Prior to relocating to Gloucester, he was with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation as the Regional Manager for the Bureau of Marine Habitat Protection on Long Island. While in NY, he was responsible for the implementation of the state's Tidal Wetland Regulations (permit review, enforcement, and compliance) as well as the management of state owned wetland properties.

Lou began his career in Marine Science in the early 1980's by obtaining his B.S. degree at Southampton College and his M.S. at Stony Brook University. Immediately after graduate school, he took a position with Stony Brook University as a Research Specialist involved in larval fish ecology.

Lou supervises and provides guidance and oversight for the Division's New England Field Office and Regional EFH Coordination. As Field Office Supervisor, Lou oversees NMFS' environmental consultation activities in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Present activities include oversight on several major Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) proposals, hydroelectric dam re-licensing, and many other coastal development projects. In his EFH Coordination role, he is actively involved with the New England and Mid Atlantic Fisheries Management Councils in the development of the habitat components of their Fishery Management Plans. Those activities include the review and revision of EFH designations, and ensuring that fishery management actions minimize adverse impacts on essential fish habitat. He was most recently responsible for coordinating an independent scientific peer review on EFH designation methodology. Lou is also involved in the development of regional and national habitat policies. (Lou.Chiarella@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9277)



Kathie Ciarametaro is the secretary for the Habitat Conservation Division. She has been with Habitat for seven years. She joined NOAA Fisheries in 1992, first as an assistant secretary in the Regional Director's Office until 1998. She is the pulse of the Division by keeping everyone organized and on track through processing of division travel; compiling work schedules; tracking travel expenses and budget; setting up meetings, workshops, and conferences, assisting in compiling and organizing materials/notebooks for Division events; compiling data from various sources for the Division chief's special projects; processing time and attendance records; providing precise editing of division letters and documents and maintaining tracking logs; processing electronic filings of FERC documents; as well as a host of other tasks vital to the running of the division.

Kathie is married (38 years to the same man!) with four grown children. She enjoys traveling with her husband, and, her most important priority - spending time with her two new grandchildren who were born in the past year, making her a first-time Grandma! (Kathleen.Ciarametaro@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9102)



Stan Gorski supervises the Division's southern field offices in Sandy Hook, NJ, Milford, CT, and Annapolis, MD. He received his B.S. degree in Biology at Fairleigh Dickinson University and a M.S. degree in Marine Biology at Long Island University. Stan is another 30+ year NMFS veteran, having started his work at the Sandy Hook lab in 1974 in the Water Resources Division. His present tasks include daily supervision of the staff in three field offices, including performance evaluations, editing of draft letters, and providing perspective and guidance backed by three decades in this business. Other tasks include participation in committees and work groups such as the Delaware Basin Fish and Wildlife Management Cooperative, the Salem Generating Station Technical Advisory Committee, the NOAA Crassostrea ariakensis team for Chesapeake Bay, the Regional EEO Committee, and the Middle Atlantic Federal Partners on the

Environment. Stan's previous employment included work as a Fishery Biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Upper Darby, PA; a Metallurgical Chemist with International Testing Labs, Newark, NJ; a Quality Control Chemist with Ashland Chemical Company, Newark, NJ; and a Reporter with the Asbury Park Press, Neptune, NJ. He also spent two years in the U.S. Army as a Research Medical Lab Technician at Edgewood Arsenal, MD.
(Stanley.W.Gorski@noaa.gov, 732/ 872-3037)



Karen Greene is a Fishery Biologist at the Sandy Hook Field Office at the James J. Howard Marine Sciences Laboratory in Highlands, NJ. She has a B.S. in Environmental Science with a concentration in Pollution Treatment Science from Cook College, Rutgers University, and a M.S. in Environmental Science from Rutgers University Graduate School. Her master's thesis topic was on wetlands mitigation banking. Karen began working with the Habitat and Protected Resources Division first as a temporary summer hire in 1991, then as a term employee. After working briefly for NOS' Coastal Resource Coordinator's office, she returned to the Habitat Division in 1993. Currently, she reviews all projects in northern and central New Jersey within the boundaries of the New York District Army Corps of Engineers including the Hackensack Meadowlands and portions of the New York and New Jersey Harbor area.

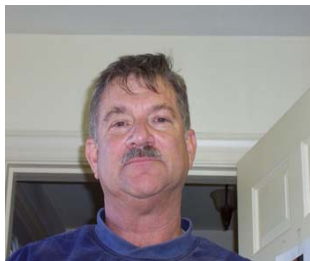
Many of the activities ongoing in the region are associated with improvements to the Port of NY and NJ, including the deepening and maintenance dredging of the channels within Newark Bay, the Arthur Kill, Kill Van Kull, Port Jersey Channel, and the Ambrose Channel. The development of compensatory mitigation for the loss of littoral habitat and enhancements to offset impacts on essential fish habitats affected by the deepening are also underway. Potential activities include habitat restoration along Woodbridge Creek, enhancements in the South Military Ocean Terminal Bayonne Channel, and the enhancement of juvenile lobster habitat in the Lower Bay. Associated with the deepening is Karen's representation for NMFS on the Comprehensive Port Improvement Plan for the landside improvements in the port area and the Hudson Raritan Estuary Restoration Study that is being developed as a comprehensive habitat restoration plan for the harbor area. The first major project to be constructed under this study is likely to be the restoration of tidal and freshwater wetlands at Liberty State Park. Other ongoing projects include several tunnels and bridges such as the Access to the Region's Core passenger rail line project, the Cross Harbor Freight Rail Project, and the replacement of the Goethals Bridge. All of the harbor projects are coordinated with staff from the Milford field office.
(Karen.Greene@noaa.gov, 732/ 872-3023)



Mike Johnson joined the Northeast Region's Habitat Conservation Division (HCD) in September 2002. Prior to relocating to HCD in Gloucester, he worked for the Southeast Regional Office's HCD in the Miami Area Office for three years, where he was responsible for reviewing regulatory permits and federal actions in the southeast Florida region. A major component of the federal actions reviewed in that region included beach nourishment, port expansion, and large navigation projects that involved adverse impacts on submerged

aquatic vegetation, coral reef, hard bottom, mangrove forest, and other habitats. Prior to coming to work for NOAA Fisheries in 1999, he was employed with the Florida Marine Research Institute (FMRI) in Cedar Key and Marathon, Florida. While at FMRI, he carried out fisheries independent monitoring and life history research on a number of fish species, including Gulf flounder, hogfish, and various snapper and grouper species. Mike received a B.S. and M.S. degree in Biology at the University of Central Florida. He and his family live in Ipswich, MA, and he enjoys many outdoor activities, including diving, fishing, photography, and running.

Mike currently serves as the Gloucester Office Team Leader, which includes Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) related issues and permit/federal project reviews. Those duties include the review of all comment letters to federal action agencies prepared by Gloucester office staff, coordinating HCD activities within the Gloucester office and between other HCD field offices in the Northeast region, and providing oversight and support for the HCD tracking database. In addition, he has responsibilities for permit/federal project review for activities occurring in the state of New Hampshire. For the past year, Mike has organized and directed a technical workshop for non-fishing impacts on fishery habitat, and is in the process of writing and editing the various chapters submitted by HCD staff for a technical report for use by the fishery management councils in their FMP amendments. As part of this effort, a training manual on the effects of non-fishing activities on coastal habitats will be developed for use by coastal resource managers and the public. (Mike.R.Johnson@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9130)



Mike Ludwig is a native New Englander. Mike has been stationed at the Agency's NEFSC, Northeast Aquaculture Center Laboratory at Milford, Connecticut since he became a National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) employee. Mike holds degrees in Biology and Marine Science and extensive graduate and post graduate training in aquaculture, coastal processes, and physical oceanography. He has worked for almost thirty years, first with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and now with NMFS. During that period, he has become a valuable asset to the Division and NMFS, assessing and commenting and providing advice on a wide diversity of coastal development and resource impact level projects, specifically in Connecticut, New York, and Rhode Island. He has also provided technical support services throughout the U.S. owing to his expertise. His initial investigations for NMFS focused on the impacts on fisheries resulting from operation of the Hudson River Power Plants. His efforts there led to cooperative agreement assignments to sister federal agencies for assessments of nuclear and fossil fuel driven power generators throughout the Northeast and occasionally throughout the U.S. He was the lead biologist in the infamous "Miller Highway" (Westway) replacement project along lower Manhattan's shoreline and the subsequent Hudson River Park creation. Mr. Ludwig was the staff coordinator to the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans regarding the commercial use and navigation of Passamaquoddy Bay on the Bay of Fundy during the assessment of a proposed petroleum refinery at Eastport, Maine. He was involved in the development of the Essential Fish Habitat program, the New England Fisheries Council offshore aquaculture protocol, as well as the dredging and dredged material Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) with the Army Corps of Engineers and EPA. Mike has chaired the Interagency Technical Committee on Dredged Material Management in New England for almost a decade. (Michael.Ludwig@noaa.gov, 203/ 882-6594)



Sean McDermott is a Fisheries Biologist with the Gloucester field office. Sean began his work with NOAA/NMFS in the Habitat Restoration Center as a contractor. In 2002, he accepted a permanent position with the Habitat Conservation Division with duties primarily covering regulatory and hydropower license review in Maine. Sean promotes the concept of habitat protection and restoration in the permit review process by working with applicants in the pre-application process to reduce project related impacts and improve habitat quality.

Sean received a Bachelors of Science degree from Salem State College in 1991, and Masters Degree in Marine Ecology in 1996 from California State University, Fresno. Prior to joining the Habitat Conservation Division, he taught high school biology and chemistry in Massachusetts for three years. Sean and his family live in New Hampshire where they enjoy many outdoor activities.

Among his numerous project activities, Sean is involved with the license review for hydroelectric projects on the Penobscot River in Maine. Several projects on the Penobscot River are part of a settlement agreement which provides for fish passage while maintaining hydroelectric generation output. Sean and other regional office staff are active in this project with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission proceedings to ensure NOAA's interests are met. Currently, NOAA staff is working with the hydrodeveloper and other resource agencies to develop a process for monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed fish passage. In addition to the fish passage monitoring process, one facility (the Orono project) will receive a new license; Sean recently worked on the final modified fishway prescription. The Penobscot River projects represent a long-term commitment by NOAA, and Sean has taken a prominent role representing the agency. (Sean.mcdermott@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9113)

John Nichols is a Fishery Biologist with the Chesapeake Bay Field Office. John has been with NOAA/NMFS Habitat Conservation Division nearly 21 years, since February 1985. Since 1985, his duties have chiefly pertained to regulatory, NEPA, and protected species review in Maryland, the District of Columbia, the Susquehanna River basin in Pennsylvania, and Virginia, where he is well represented by interagency colleagues. John has developed specialties in anadromous fish ecology, fish passage restoration associated with small stream barriers, and soil microbiology.

John received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Biology from Nasson College in 1971, and a Masters Degree in Zoology from Michigan State University in 1973. Additionally, he has completed numerous hours of post-graduate collegiate training, most recently specializing in soil microbiology at the University of Maryland in College Park. He previously worked as a research technician and biologist in parasitology for five years with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Many of the major activities encompassing John's time have been associated with the Port of Baltimore. Serving on work groups and committees associated with the Port's Dredge Material Management Program, John has been a significant player in representing NOAA's interests in

the development of the Port's Long Term Dredge Material Disposal Plan. This plan includes expansion of the Poplar Island Restoration Project, development of a plan for constructing the Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Restoration Project, development of disposal and environmental restoration options for Baltimore's Inner Harbor, and in an advisory role for disposal options and planned deepening of the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal and Approach Channels. John has contributed 17 years of his career to review of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project, which carries Interstate-95 across the Potomac River near the District of Columbia, and continues his involvement with compliance review of the compensatory mitigation package for this project. John's involvement in NEPA review has also extended into numerous other major highway, navigation, and civil works projects, including the U.S. 301 Southern Corridor Study in Prince Georges County and Charles County, Maryland; the Interstate-95 Corridor Study in northern Maryland; and the Potomac River Federal Navigation Project. John is very influential in providing habitat protection in these activities. As throughout his 20-year involvement in the regulatory review process, John continues to focus his advisory role in the review of private sector and local government projects on the protection of submerged aquatic vegetation beds in the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland coastal bays, and the protection and restoration of anadromous fish migratory runs within both the tidal and nontidal regions of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

John is married and has 6 children and 9 grandchildren. His hobbies include freshwater spincast fishing, camping, reading, and working on his home in Lancaster County, PA.

(John.Nichols@noaa.gov, 410/ 267-5675)



Jill Ortiz is a long standing Habitat Conservation Division employee at the Northeast Regional Office. She has been working part-time as a Marine Habitat Resource Specialist for the Division since 1992. Jill has a Bachelor's degree in Fish Biology from Colorado State University. Her duties have varied widely in her 13 plus years of service. Presently, she is compiling a bibliographic reference database on non-fishing impacts on EFH. She also assists technical staff on regulatory permit activities, as well as compiling the Division's Monthly Highlights and Regional Office Newsletter. Jill especially enjoys working with children and spreading the message about the importance of habitat conservation. She has helped develop several primers for school age children that provide knowledge and foster interests in young conservationists.

Jill is married and has two children. Her son, Joshua, started high school this year and her daughter, Andraya, is off to kindergarten. Jill enjoys volunteering at her children's schools, as well as camping, fishing, and gig rowing. **(Jill.Ortiz@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9312)**



Anita Riportella has worked as a fisheries biologist for the Habitat Conservation Division at the James J. Howard Marine Sciences Laboratory, Sandy Hook, NJ for over ten years. She earned a B.S. in Biology and MAT in marine science education from Monmouth University. Anita works to minimize impacts on NOAA trust resources in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware by providing conservation recommendations to state and federal agencies pursuant to the Fish and

Wildlife Coordination Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Endangered Species Act, and other NOAA authorities.

Recently, Anita has been working with state and federal agencies to reduce impacts that would be incurred due to the Crown Landing/Logan Lateral project. The project includes the construction and operation of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility on the Delaware River in Logan Township, Gloucester County, NJ and the waters of the state of Delaware; and the construction and operation of a new natural gas pipeline and ancillary facilities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Facilities capable of unloading LNG ships, storing up to 450,00 cubic meters of LNG and vaporizing the LNG through a closed-loop system, would include the conversion of shallow water habitat to deep water habitat by dredging the ships' berth area to -40 below mean low water which reduces its habitat value for fishes. Efforts to reduce the area of dredging of shallow water habitat by altering the berthing placement and design of the berthing area have resulted in a decrease from approximately 12 acres of dredging of shallow water habitat to approximately 7 acres of dredging of shallow water habitat. Work continues to further decrease shallow water dredging in accordance with our mandate to avoid, minimize, and mitigate for adverse impacts and still maintain strict safety and security measures. Other impacts of dredging include impacts on aquatic organisms due to resuspension of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in an area reported to contain PCBs in the sediments. In addition, impacts on eggs and larvae of fishes, including prey species of federally managed fishes, would occur due to impingement and entrainment from the ships' ballast water intakes. LNG vessels would visit the terminal three times a week requiring about 13 to 19 million gallons of intake water each visit. Openings for the ballast water intakes are about 3.55 square meters and are located about 8.4 to 9.5 meters below the ship's waterline; impacts are an issue of concern. According to the February 2005 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, impingement and entrainment are significant. State and federal agencies are working to provide more protection for fisheries resources from the ballast water intakes. (anita.riportella@noaa.gov, 732/ 872-3116)

Diane Rusanowsky is a native New Englander who has worked for NOAA Fisheries Service in various capacities for over 26 years. Her first appointment with the agency was as a NOAA National Junior Federal Fellow while she pursued a baccalaureate degree in ecology and physiology at Dartmouth College. Upon graduating, Diane joined the Northeast Fisheries Science Center's Milford Laboratory where she enjoyed over a decade researching the life history of marine and estuarine organisms and how pollutants affect their biochemistry, physiology, and recruitment. While working in this capacity, Diane began graduate studies at the Connecticut State University, joined the Northeast Region's Habitat Conservation staff in 1990, and subsequently completed a Master's Degree in Oceanography and Limnology several years later. Diane enjoys reviewing and commenting on a diverse variety of coastal development projects in New York State, her geographic area of responsibility. Recent major project work has focused on maintaining and expanding transportation, communications, and port infrastructure in the New York Metropolitan Area, while ensuring continued aquatic resource protection. A growing focus of this work is reviewing projects proposed to meet increasing energy demands in southern New England and the Mid-Atlantic region. Outside of her work, Diane is an active member of Lions Club International and is a doctoral candidate in Environmental Studies at Antioch University. Her dissertation research concerns the regulatory implications of transgenic fishes. (Diane.Rusanowsky@noaa.gov, 203/ 882-6571)



Marcy Scott is a habitat specialist in the Northeast Regional Office located in Gloucester, MA. She comes to the Division with a strong educational background in both marine science and ecology. Marcy was employed by the USDA through the Forest Service, Food Safety and Inspection Service, and the Agriculture Research Service prior to joining the National Marine Fisheries Service in December of 2003. Her main duties include regional and programmatic EFH consultation issues as well as providing technical and policy support to the fishery management councils. Marcy is currently developing a programmatic EFH consultation process for exempted fishing permits. These internal actions frequently request exemptions for gear modifications and access to closed areas for experimental purposes. The development of this consultation process will help to streamline the complicated process of applying for these permits. Through this programmatic consultation, Marcy hopes to simplify the application process for the applicant, provide the Sustainable Fisheries Division staff with the knowledge they need to spot potential habitat issues, and lighten the consultation load for the HCD staff. (Marcy.Scott@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9108)



David Stevenson is a Marine Habitat Resource Specialist in the Habitat Conservation Division of the NOAA Fisheries Service Northeast Regional Office in Gloucester, MA. He has worked in this capacity since December 2002. His primary responsibility is to provide technical and policy support to the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils to implement the essential fish habitat (EFH) provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Dr. Stevenson has 30 years of experience as a fisheries scientist. He received his BA in Biology from Antioch College in 1967 and his Ph.D in Oceanography from the University of Rhode Island in 1976. He served in the U.S. Peace Corps for two years, was an Assistant Professor of Zoology at the University of Maine for five years, and worked for the Maine Department of Marine Resources for 12 years as the Director of the Resource Assessment and Statistics Division. He has also worked for a year as a project manager for an environmental consulting company in Portland, Maine, where he directed biological surveys and prepared EFH assessments for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District.

At present, Dr. Stevenson is assisting the two regional fishery management councils in developing and implementing new methodologies for revising existing designations of EFH for all federally-managed fish and invertebrate species in the region. He is also working with the New England Fishery Management Council to identify candidate Habitat Areas of Particular Concern, evaluate the potential adverse impacts of fishing gear and practices on EFH, and to develop methods for assessing how vulnerable and to what degree different types of marine habitats are to the effects of fishing and non-fishing impacts. (Dave.Stevenson@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9118)



Peter Colosi is the Region's Assistant Regional Administrator for the Habitat Conservation Division, where the illustrious staff and he carry out the responsibility to protect the habitats of living marine resources that may be impacted by coastal and waterway use and development. A major focus is implementation of essential fish habitat protection related to fishing and non-fishing impacts. Among the focus areas are fishing regulations, pipelines, renewable energy, civil works projects, hydropower, and the myriad of project types that require permitting and review by federal and state agencies.

A lifelong resident of Massachusetts, Pete and his family live in North Reading. He obtained a B.A. degree at Salem State College, and a M.S. degree at Northeastern University and studied at the University's Marine Science Institute. Pete began his 30+ year career with NMFS as a biological technician working on northern shrimp gear evaluation and fisheries management studies (he remembers measuring 250,000 shrimp that year!). In 1975, he became project manager for the State-Federal Northern Shrimp Program, and later served on many species management committees. With the advent of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Peter, as a policy analyst, reviewed and evaluated fishery management plans such as New England groundfish, whiting, and redfish, among others. In 1986, he became Chief of the Fisheries Operations Branch, with regional responsibilities for management plan review and implementation. In 1990, he headed up the Fishery Analysis Division where his staff addressed policy questions to aid decision making for the fishery management process, and had responsibility for the northeast vessel/dealer fishery statistics collection. In 1998, he assumed his present position in the Habitat Conservation Division. (peter.colosi@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9332)